

**Comparison of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers Based on
Their Subject of Specialisation**

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out the difference in the mean scores of coping strategies of student teachers based on their subject of specialisation. A total of 558 student teachers were selected for the study. Results indicate that there exists a significant difference in the mean scores of Coping Strategies of student teachers of Arts and Science subjects and the mean score of Arts students is greater than that of Science. The findings implicated the need for developing proper coping strategies among student teachers.

Key Words:coping strategies, student teachers, subject of specialisation

Comparison of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers Based on Their Subject of Specialisation

Adjustment or coping in teaching profession is all more important because it helps in maintaining balance between his/her needs and circumstances in which he is teaching. The satisfactions of his desires reflect the behaviour of a person. A well-adjusted person can think clearly, act confidently and interact effectively with the situations. There are many ways by which a person cope or adjust with stress. In the ultimate analysis the typical manner in which a particular individual copes with the stressful situation may be unique to him. It is perhaps unlikely that several persons put under similar academic stress situations may always react in identical ways.

A study examined pre-service teachers coping styles and their responses to bullying and emphasised the need to consider teacher coping styles when working with them to intervene effectively in responding to bullying (Kahn et al. 2012). A significant influence of Emotional Intelligence on Coping Strategies of student teachers was found when the three levels of Emotional Intelligence were compared which reveals that, Emotional Intelligence has a significant role in determining the Coping strategies of student teachers (Suresh, 2014). In another study on academic stress and Coping Strategies of student teachers the result was that Study habits and mental health of the teacher trainees had a significant relation with their Coping Strategies (Balaji, 2013)

Coping is management of stress or it can be explained as a process to overcome stressors i.e. demands made on an individual. In stress literature, the word coping has two connotations: (a) It denotes the way of dealing with stress and (b) The effort to master the conditions of harm, threat or challenge when a routine or automatic response is not readily

available (Lazarus, 1974). Coping is considered as an important resource that can help individuals to maintain psychological adaptation during a stressful episode.

Such situations are frequent in the case of student teachers as they are the active participants of social construction. They might be confused whether to take action or not. Hence adopting active coping strategies is mandatory and the present study intends to find out the difference in the mean scores of coping strategies of student teachers based on their subject of specialisation

Statement of the Problem

The present study is undertaken with objective of testing the difference in the mean scores of coping strategies of student teachers based on their subject of specialisation. Thus the study is entitled as: Comparison of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers based on their subject of specialisation.

Study Objective

The objective of the study is to find out the difference in the mean scores of coping strategies of student teachers based on their subject of specialisation.

Methodology

The normative survey method is that method of investigation, which attempts to describe and interpret what exist at present in the form of conditions, practices, process, effects, attitudes, beliefs etc.

Participants.A sample of 558 student teachers were selected using stratified random sampling technique

Measures.Coping Strategies Inventory for Student Teachers is the measure used for the study

Data Analysis

The study employed *F* test or ANOVA and Scheffe's Post Hoc Analysis

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables in the study

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers with Respect to Subject of Specialisation

Group	n	M	SD
Arts	152	213.71	13.81
Commerce	70	210.14	16.65
Humanities	114	209.34	14.03
Science	222	209.07	15.61

Table 2 represents one way ANOVA for significant difference in the mean scores

Table 2

Data and Result of One Way ANOVA for Significant Difference in the Mean Scores of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers with Respect to Subjects of Specialisation

Variable	Source of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	p
Coping Strategies	Between Groups	2177.91	3	725.97		
	Within Groups	124099.2	554	224.01	3.24	.02
	Total	126277.1	557			

Table 3 represents the results of Scheffe's Post Hoc Analysis for comparing the difference

Table 3

Results of Scheffe's Post Hoc Test of Difference Among the Mean Scores of Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Arts, Commerce, Humanities and Science Groups

		Mean Difference	
(I) option	(J) option	(I-J)	p
Arts	Commerce	3.56	.43
Arts	Humanities	4.36	.13
Arts	Science	4.63	.03
Commerce	Humanities	.80	.98
Commerce	Science	1.06	.96
Humanities	Science	.26	.99

The difference in the mean scores of Coping Strategies of student teachers of Arts, Commerce, Humanities, and Science subjects is graphically represented in Figure 5.

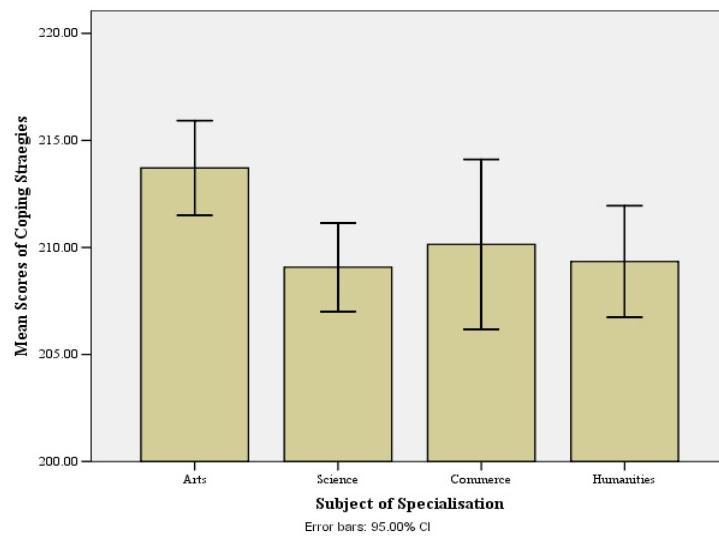


Figure 5.Difference in the mean scores ofCoping Strategies of student teachers based on their subject of specialisation.

Discussion

Results indicate that there exists a significant difference in the mean scores of Coping Strategies of student teachers of Arts and Science subjects and the mean score of Arts students is greater than that of Science. For all other pairs of comparisons the difference is negligible. It means that students with arts as their subject of specialisation have the ability to cope with conflicting situations in an effective manner. This may be due to the presence of certain elements in arts curriculum. On the contrary Suresh (2014) reported that subject of study do not significantly influence the stress and coping strategies of student teachers.

Implications of the findings

Findings of the study reveals that student teachers should be made cognizant about sound Coping Strategies so that they can adopt them to deal with conflicting situation in their personal as well as professional life. Intervention programmes like yoga and meditation exercises should be provided for student teachers. It will help them to come out of the conflicting situations and become successful teachers. Identifying the elements that contribute to active and effective coping and including such elements in all subjects of study can help student teachers to overcome the stressful situations to a great extent.

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